

A HAWAIIAN'S IMPRESSIONS IN FOREIGN LANDS.

No. 3.

[CONCLUDED.]

Our first visit next morning was to the celebrated Monkey Temple. It is a small temple by a large tank of holy water and scores of monkeys surrounded the place worshipped and fed by the Hindus. In the temple is also a silver image of one of the Hindu gods whom they also worship. At the time of our visit there was a rich and devout Hindu with his followers bearing rice and flowers, came to worship the god. Impelled by curiosity and forgetting possible proprieties, I followed them into the temple and had just seen the opening act—the chucking of rice at the god—when they perceived me, and perhaps ashamed of their tricks they pretended to be intensely indignant, and pointing at my profane shoes, (they were all barefooted) and loudly jabbering two fellows got hold of me and rushed me out of that temple in double quick time, and landed me out among a parcel of monkeys. I then commenced a game with the monkeys when one of them got away with my stick. I chased him but was soon stopped by the priest who had expelled me from the temple who informed me that the monkeys were sacred and not to be trifled with. I thereupon gave him a few coppers to chase the rascally, though sacred monkey himself and recover my stick which he soon did. Then going to the tank of holy water I saw a monkey religiously bathing in it. The natural impulse was to throw a pebble at him which I did and the priest again interfered. Now I have always entered these Hindu temples, respecting their devotions, though pitying their ignorance, but now I felt I was being persecuted for the sake of a monkey and I wanted to get even with that priest. He was a high caste fellow and was besmeared with smut and paint; so I told him that the last time I had seen a man disfigured like him, it was an American Indian but those fellows were wild men and people shot them down at sight. I left him in deep meditation over my remark and I believe that man will be a Christian yet.

Then I left that temple voting to myself that monkey temples are not a success.

We next visited the Golden Temple on the banks of the Ganges dedicated to Siva, the greatest of Hindu deities, and considered the holiest of holy places in the holy city. But more filth and degradation it never was my misfortune to see. In the temple are numerous sacred bulls, covered with dirt and filth and their quarters of the temple reeking with the most horrible smells. A well where the god Siva is supposed to reside is almost filled with the floral offerings of devotees and the putrid smell of rotting flowers is so trying to our nostrils we look not into that well. Beggars and pilgrims crowd the temple and go down in the most disgusting attitudes of penance before hideous images of stone. And amid all the filth and stench wretched looking priests claimed "backsheesh" from the stranger or take coppers from the ignorant worshippers, some of whom have travelled miles and miles just to pray in this dirty hole. It is a perfect illustration of the pitiable ignorance and degradation of modern Hinduism which has sadly degenerated from the high and noble teachings of Brahmin Veda and of Buddha on which it was originally based.

We visited no more temples; we each and all cried "hold, enough!"

There is a great deal that is beautiful and interesting in the mythology of the Hindu religion, the traditions of some of these sacred places, and the gods to whom they are dedicated, but he must be a scholar, an enthusiast, or an antiquarian who will explore them further—we will be content to read their accounts of them at our leisure.

An ignorant and degenerate priesthood have distorted and degraded nearly all that was good in their religion.

In the death of the late Keshub Chunda Sen, the Hindus have lost a great reformer who has spent a long life in trying to elevate his fellow-countrymen from their religious degradation. His eulogist has said of him: "The native of India who, amid the surrounding ruins, has the moral

force to conceive a system of pure and refined Deism, which satisfies emotion without insulting reason, who can commend his views to other men, and mark out the path in which they may tread, and organize a system for the guidance of their lives is one of the moving spirits of his age.

Around him he found society degraded, impoverished and ruined. Within him was an idea of what society ought to be and he lived and died for that one idea—the advancement of his countrymen to loftier standards of morality, of religion and of freedom of thought, and in the death of Keshub Chunda Sen the people of India have sustained a great loss."

But his (Keshub Chunda Sen's) writings and his pupils survive him and their influence is spreading fast.

Rising up from the banks of the Ganges, and forming a rather picturesque front to the city, are the Ghats and among the numerous houses rise the pinnacles of Hindu pagodas and temples, two tall minarets and numerous temples in all the varied styles of Hindu architecture; and the river itself is beautiful as its perceptible tide moves majestically by.

Early in the morning before day-break we took one of the native boats and seated on the deck or roof that covered it, we were slowly rowed down the river and along the ghats where the people came at sunrise to bathe and say their prayers. All along the stone steps leading down to the water's edge were crowds of people bathing, taking a sip of the holy water and looking towards the rising sun repeating their prayers. Others again were on covered floats attached to the steps and guided by priests, performing certain religious ceremonies. We stopped and watched one old lady. She was seated on one of the floats and had around her a number of little silver pots and a bunch of flowers. In the pots were rice, oil, etc. Taking a pinch from each pot and a flower, and casting it into the river, she would look at the sun and repeat a prayer. That job was to last her an hour and a half and the amount of absolution she was to receive from it was to be regulated in part by the amount of "backsheesh" she would give to the priestly proprietor of the float.

Passing a large building, the abode of the priests, suddenly a terrific din, as of a thousand tum-tums (gongs) and bells disturbed the air. It was the hour of prayer thus made public.

Further on we came to the Manikamika Ghat, the most sacred of all, for here it is where the dead bodies are burned and the ashes floated on the river. We arrived just in time to see a body cremated. It was a child. Covered in white cloth it was dipped three times into the river and then placed on a pile of wood right by the river's edge. The fire was lit, the body writhed in flames and when totally burned the ashes were shovelled out into the river. The father and mother sat on a rock close by and watched it to the end.

We saw more bodies being brought down and then urged our men to their oars to get away from there. Can you imagine how our breakfast relished after all that?

I might go on and write a long chapter of strange scenes on the Ganges but I think I have told sufficient; you may also be at breakfast when you read this.

Returning up town we met a procession of women headed by boys with music and flowers going down to their sacred bath, other processions returning and carrying on their heads huge earthen vessels of sacred water for household purposes.

There are a number of fine palaces in Benares of rich Rajahs with whom it is an ambition to have a residence in the holy city.

We drove into the pretty gardens of H. H. the Maharajah of Vizianagram, and were admiring the flowers and the oriental architecture of the palace, when some one of the household came out and invited us in. H. H. was absent but the gentleman did the honors and showed us numerous fine paintings of Indian Kings and Princes and English Viceroy. The rooms were furnished entirely in European style.

Leaving Benares a ride of a day and night brings us to Calcutta, the capital of India. The hotels are all crowded on account of the exhibition, but we manage to find rooms at the Great Eastern Hotel.

The European quarter of the city

has many handsome streets and fine buildings, and the native quarter is much like that of Bombay. The Government house is a queer building, combined of great steps, pillars and corridors, standing in a large and well kept garden and guarded by a troop of handsome Indian soldiers.

The Eden Gardens just beyond are most prettily laid out. At the extreme end in view of the river and the shipping is a large open lawn, which just at dusk is brilliantly lit with electric lights, and a band of music plays every evening. It is a fashionable resort and around it and extending on in several directions are magnificent drives, which for an hour are crowded with horseback riders, dog carts and many elegant equipages. The picturesque and brilliant costumes of the Hindu drivers and footmen making a gay and lively scene, a great contrast to the unvaried sameness of such scenes in European parks and boulevards.

The Zoological gardens are very handsome and extensive and contain a collection of birds and animals almost equal to the London Zoo, and certainly a much pleasanter resort for they are scattered around amid trees, shrubs and flowers, ponds and fountains, and cool and shady walks, and you can pass a whole day there pleasantly and leisurely taking your meals at the cafe in the garden and listen to the military music in the afternoon.

About six miles from the city (Calcutta) are the Botanical Gardens, a great park of about three hundred acres handsomely laid out in drives and containing magnificent groups and avenues of palms; valuable, beautiful and strange trees, plants, and shrubs in endless variety. This garden as well as three others in India exchange and sell plants to all parts of the world. If our small efforts in this line had more liberal assistance from the legislature, I dare say many valuable and ornamental trees and shrubs might be introduced in this manner, especially the gum, spice and other productive trees of the tropics, which might possibly be conserved under a proper system of forestry with eventual profit. In any event our private gardens could enrich their collection with some of these beautiful palms and shrubs, that would flourish so easily in our climate.

A little distance from the city on the banks of the Hoogly are the extensive emigration depots, models of cleanliness and comfort. Here people are brought in from all parts of northern India and after passing a proper period of probation are embarked to various sugar producing colonies. Dr. Grant the Government Protector of Emigrants and his assistants keep watch and ward over them, that they embark under proper conditions, and that none go who have any suspicion of sickness or disease, or seem physically disqualified. We saw a ship load of them depart for Guadeloupe, a nice looking lot of people and all seemingly happy and content with the prospects before them. I wish some day a similar ship may be seen to sail out of the Hoogly with the Hawaiian flag at her foretop mast to indicate her destination. We were in Calcutta a week and then embarked in the P. & O. steamer "Deccan" for Colombo.

Going down the Hoogly river for nearly two miles we pass a vast number of ships of all nations ranged in a long and regular procession four abreast, awaiting cargo or awaiting their turn to go up the river to load or discharge.

At night we anchor for the navigation of the Hoogly is dangerous, though the three hundred and more pilots of Calcutta are the best in the world, and are very stylish withal in their neat uniform.

The second day we are clear of the river and have a four days run to Madras.

The sea has the dead calm of the

Indian Ocean at this season, and the weather is clear but awfully hot. Over 90 deg. in the shade on deck. At night our beds are made up on deck, for it is too oppressive in the calms, and so we lay stretched out in long rows on deck reminding me very much of travel on the "Likelike."

In due time we drop anchor within the breakwater off Madras. Almost immediately our ship is surrounded by boats and we are soon overrun with jugglers and peddlers of all sorts. The jugglers of Madras are the most famous in India and they perform before us some remarkable feats of fire eating, sword swallowing, etc., etc. They will also sell you some of the cunning little puzzles they have.

Crowds of noisy coolies surround the ship to handle cargo, in their strange, old fashioned galleys. There is no order or system among them. Neither do the officers of the ship attempt to regulate the work, but with kicks and cuffs and a confused babel of noise the work proceeds slowly. Anyone who has seen the rapidity and despatch with which a large steamer is handled in Honolulu would wonder at the confusion, delay and small amount of work accomplished here not the fault of the coolies but that no attempt is made to regulate and organize the work, and the poor fellows are in continued fright of the quartermaster's stick or sailors' kicks. They are fine looking fellows and hard workers and would do well if only managed.

The Malabars or Tamils of Madras are a strong and sturdy race of people, and in Ceylon as elsewhere they are highly valued as laborers, for they are very docile under proper treatment and are easily managed. I have since met several Ceylon coffee planters who employ them entirely and they speak in the highest terms of their good qualities, their endurance, energy, good nature and capability for work. Thousands of them emigrate annually to the coffee and cinchona estates in Ceylon and to the various colonies; and thousand more would like to emigrate anywhere where pay and work could be assured them.

We lay at Madras for twenty-four hours and the third day after leaving we are coasting all day in view of the cocoa fringed coast of Ceylon and at evening came to anchor inside the Colombo breakwater.

Through some miserable arrangement of the P. & O. Co. we failed to connect with the China steamer that had sailed twenty-four hours previous, and consequently we are obliged to remain in Ceylon and wait for the next boat. But Colombo just now is an awfully hot place to stay in, and anyhow it is a dreary place, so we enquire for some cool spot where we can spend the time and that brings us to the place where we now are and where I first opened this letter.

Going into Colombo one day, I met an English gentleman who was about to make a visit to Arabi Pasha, the Egyptian rebel, who is in exile in Ceylon. He had known him formerly and was going to see him, mainly to secure his autograph for some lady friend. Taking advantage of his invitation, myself and two others accompanied him.

Driving out about three miles on a beautiful road leading through a dense grove of cocoanut trees, we arrive at Arabi's residence, a large bungalow surrounded by a large garden of trees and palms.

No guard is kept over him but he lives there with his attendants at perfect liberty to go and come

anytime he chooses anywhere in Ceylon. But he knows well that any attempt at escape would be useless.

Arabi was seated on a chair under a large mango tree and by him was his Egyptian interpreter. He rose as we descended from our carriage, and while we saluted him his servant placed chairs for us. Arabi was "en dishabille," a loose pajama suit of white, a fez on his head, and he smoked a tobacco pipe. The only jewel about him was a large and handsome cats-eye ring. He seemed pleased at our visit and said many English people called on him and he felt grateful for their kindness and politeness.

In the course of conversation through his interpreter he said he was contented where he was and had no further ambition to return to Egypt. He had started out once with a hope to create civilized reforms in Egypt, but the English had taken the work out of his hands, and he believed they would accomplish more that he could have done. Some day he might like to return to Egypt when substantial Government order and security prevailed. As for the Mahdi he was only a religious fanatic who could never control all the various tribes of the Soudan and a small army of British troops could soon overwhelm him.

Though he said he was content there was nevertheless on his face a settled look of disappointment and discontent. He is a splendid looking fellow, and far from any oriental languor he looks like a man of action and decisive character, and he talks with intelligence and dignity. Undoubtedly if his career had not been interrupted he would have been a great and powerful man in Egypt.

As we sat in conversation we heard the sweet music of a harp proceeding from a distant part of the building, and on enquiring the interpreter informed us that the ladies of the harem were being entertained.

Arabi very graciously gave the desired autograph, writing it both in English and Egyptian and then we took our leave. He politely accompanied us to our carriage and raised his hand to his fez in military salute in response as we raised our hats in adieu.

We took one day and night to make the excursion to Kandy, the former capital, in the central province of Ceylon.

It is prettily situated in the mountains about 1,500 feet above the sea level and the seventy miles of railway that leads to it is one of the prettiest rides I have taken.

It is a wonderful piece of engineering, winding gradually up the grade in immense and graceful curves, skirting along the edges of the steep precipices, tunneling hills and passing through thick jungles. The scenery from some of the points of elevation is a magnificent panorama of hills and valleys, vast jungles of tropical foliage in which the mighty palmyra and graceful coconut figure most prominently, exuberant masses of foliage, broad valleys richly cultivated, beautiful cascades and streams. It is a lovely variety of changing scenery; but I believe that a similar road on Hawaii, say from the Waipio Valley through the Hamakua district to Hilo would be even more charming in scenery and general effect.

In Kandy itself there is not much of special interest to see, though it is a favorite resort for tourists visiting Ceylon, for the temperature is rather mild and there are many pretty walks and drives in the surrounding hills. A few days may be passed very pleasantly, but they cannot go pic-nicing in the woods,